

Claims:

1. A processing apparatus for video and or audio signals comprising:
 - a first module (11) having a controller (13C) coupled to a signal processor (13A) having a signal processing characteristic selected from a plurality signal processing characteristics stored in a non-volatile memory (13B); and,
 - a second module (21) coupled to said first module (11) and having a specific input output signal coupling characteristic,
 - wherein said controller (13C) determines said input output signal coupling characteristic of said second module (21) and in accordance therewith selects from said plurality signal processing characteristics stored in said non-volatile memory (13B) a signal processing characteristic for said signal processor(13A).
2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said controller (13C) determines said input output signal coupling characteristic of said second module (21) during a power up sequence.
3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said second module (21) comprises a personality pin (PERP) coupled to said first module (11) to enable detection of said input output signal coupling characteristic by said controller (13C).
4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said controller (13C) determines said input output signal coupling characteristic of said second module (21) by measurement of a coupling node.
5. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said controller (13C) determines said input output signal coupling characteristic of said second module (21) in accordance with a potential at a node between said first and second module.
6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said controller (13C) determines said input output signal coupling characteristic of said second module (21) by measurement and comparison with a lookup table.

7. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said second module (21) comprises only passive electronic circuitry.

8. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein other ones of said plurality signal processing characteristics stored in said non-volatile memory (13B) correspond with other ones of said second module (21) each having different input output signal coupling characteristics.

9. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said second module (21) comprises passive and active electronic circuitry.

10. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein said active electronic circuitry is functionally configurable.

11. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said first module (11) has an audio signal processing characteristic.

12. A processing apparatus for video and or audio signals, comprising:

a first module having a controller (13C) coupled to a memory (13B) and to a signal processor (13A) having a signal processing characteristic determined by one of a plurality of processing characteristics stored in said memory (13B); and,

a second module (21) having a second signal processing characteristic; wherein said controller (13C) determines said second signal processing characteristic of said second module (21) and retrieves from said plurality of processing characteristics stored in said memory (13B) a processing characteristic for said signal processor (13A) in accordance with said determined signal processing characteristic of said second module (21).

13. The apparatus of claim 12, wherein other ones of said plurality processing characteristics stored in said memory (13B) correspond with other ones of said second module (21) each having a different signal processing characteristic.

14. The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said controller (13C) determines said signal processing characteristic of said second module (21) by measurement of a second module identifier (ZR) during a power up sequence.

15. A processing apparatus for video and or audio signals comprising:
a network interface (300);
a controller (13C) coupled to said network interface(300);
a memory (13B) coupled to said controller(13C); and,
a signal processor (13A) coupled to said memory(13C), said signal processor (13A) having a signal processing characteristic determined in accordance with a characteristic stored in said memory (13B),
where in accordance with a signal (RC1)from said network interface (300), said controller (13C) accesses from a plurality of characteristics stored in said memory (13B) a characteristic specific to said processing apparatus.

16. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein access to ones of said stored plurality of signal processing characteristics is limited to only said specific characteristic.

17. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said plurality of characteristics stored in said memory (13B) enable differing levels of signal processing complexity by said signal processor (13A).

18. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein access to ones of said stored plurality of signal processing characteristics is in accordance with said processing apparatus selling price.

19. The apparatus of claim 15, where in accordance with a second signal (RC2) from said network interface (300) said controller (13C) enables unlimited access to ones of said stored plurality of signal processing characteristics.

20. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said memory (13B) containing said plurality of signal processing characteristics is alterable in accordance with a second signal (RC2) from said network interface (300).

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21. A method for configuring a multi-function signal processing apparatus for users requiring less than all available functions, comprising the steps of:

 storing a signal processing characteristic for each of said available functions; and,

 enabling access to at least a predetermined one of said plurality of signal processing characteristics, all remaining ones of said plurality of signal processing characteristics being non-accessible,

 subsequent to said storing and enabling steps said signal processing apparatus being operable only with said at least predetermined one of said plurality of signal processing characteristics.

22. The method of claim 21, comprising the step of:

 implementing said enabling step in a field programmable gate array (13A).

23. The method of claim 21, wherein said enabling step comprises the step of inhibiting access to all but said at least predetermined one of said plurality of signal processing characteristics.

24. The method of claim 21, wherein said enabling step comprises the step of enabling said at least predetermined one of said plurality of signal processing characteristics to be read during a power up condition of said apparatus.